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A P P E A L
FROM THE
P R O P H E T S
TO THEIR
P R O P H E C I E S.

Evidencing the new Dispensation they
pretend, to be of the same Stamp and
Authority with their

P R E D I C T I O N S.

Which here are prov'd full of Falsity,
by some notorious and undeniable In-
stances, that may be prov'd from Ear-
Witnesses of unquestionable Credit, or
other Authentick Records, when oc-
casion serves.

L O N D O N,

Printed for J. Morphew near Stationers-
Hall, 1708.

THE

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A N
A P P E A L
 FROM THE
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 TO THEIR
PROPHECIES.

SUCH as have a tender Regard for God's Honour, and the Peace and Safety of their own Souls, are very fearful of offending Him in any thing, much more do they dread any Thoughts of opposing Him, and being found Fighters against God. As this should teach us Caution, and serious Deliberation, before we pass a Censure upon any thing that relates more immediately to Him: So when we have duly weighed Matters, and thoroughly considered their Nature and Tendency, we must not suffer our selves to be discouraged, in the Discharge of our Duty, by needless Fears, or the bold Menaces of any. The Scriptures bid us try the Spirits, and fore-

warn us often of Deceivers, false Prophets, and lying Wonders, so powerful to delude, *that if possible they would deceive the very Elect*. This is a fair Warning to a giddy World, which is more readily impress'd by the Pageantry of Gesture, Agitation, big Looks, Promises of any audacious Pretender, than all the weighty Truths of the Gospel. And what's the Root of all this, but Pride and Curiosity, an itchy Desire to pry into Futurity, to excel others, and appear the peculiar Darlings of Heaven; to idolize Sense and vilifie the Actings of Faith, most suitable to the present State of Probation, and infinitely more pleasing to God. *Blessed are they which have not seen, and yet believe.* But why shou'd any thoughtful Person wonder at this, when he may see the Conclusion tri'd every Day? Don't Mountebanks, by little Tricks of Fellows in Fools Coats, attract the Gaze of the Mob, till by Grimaces and grave Speeches, tickling their Ears and Fancies, they get the Government of their Purses and Bodies. I can't hope to do the Head of the Clan any Service by this plain Dealing, there being a natural and judicial Tendency to Obstinacy, in these Cases. 'Tis very grateful to Flesh and Blood, to be caress'd and idoliz'd, as Persons of peculiar Gifts and Powers; to be homag'd, treated, and applauded, as Vice-Gods, or mighty Prophets; to bless or curse, prosper or confound at Discretion, and to have all Mankind at the Beck and Caprice of their Passion or Humor: And we read of some given up to a reprobate Mind,

strong

strong Delusions to believe a Lie. Real Miracles, nay, a Voice from Heaven, wou'd scarce reclaim such: what then will all humane Remonstrances avail to reduce 'em to their Duty, when they are told of the horrid Consequences of their blasphemous Pre-
 sences? Others there are that stand ready to be press'd into the Service of the first extraordinary Appearance of any new and great Design: Either Interest, or an enthusiastic Genius, or both, makes them proud of Discipleship: These, like Straws and Feathers, are easily drawn in, and run round with every Whirl-pool of Error; and as easie is it to turn the Course of Nature, as such Mens Dispositions. But some there are, it's hoped, which are not past Remedy, who are honestly willing to receive Truth: And others of the same Integrity may be prevented, that yet are untouch'd: For the Sake of such, these short Collections are faithfully made of some material Passages relating to the Prophets, and the new and strange Dispensation they pretend to, which take as follow.

I. In 1706. they predicted the Fall of *Pharaoh* to be speedy, at farthest in Three or Four Years; that every Campaign till then, shou'd be more and more successful each than the other, till his final Downfal. That this Year, before the Campaign ended, a great Man in the *French* Court shou'd declare himself a Protestant: That *Toulon* shou'd be taken, and the *Tower-Guns* go off in a Week: But of late, for very weighty Reasons, they say little on that Subject.

II. They.

II. They pretended an Order from the Spirit to put some Persons absolutely on the Performance of that, which was not in their Power, under several severe Penalties and the Non-Execution of those Menaces as well as the Nature of that strange Injunction, palpably declare the Nature of that Spirit which set them on Work.

III. One of them express'd great Joy, that he shou'd suffer for the Cause, foretelling, That upon the Publishing of a Book, he shou'd be imprison'd immediately, and one in his Family upon that, shou'd commence forthwith a Prophet: but out of a Superabundancy of needless Caution, that very Day he withdrew from home, and skulk'd in Obscurity some Miles out of Town, and there continued many Days by Virtue of a pretended Counter-Order from the Spirit: A common Expedient they use to amuze ignorant People. This Book was publish'd some Months since, and never any Attempt made to seize his Person.

IV. One of them pretended an Order from the Spirit to fast a Week, and so on in different Periods, till he shou'd be able to live without Victuals altogether. The Upshot of this was, that in the Space of about Three Days, he pretended a Counter-Order of the Spirit forthwith to eat, and that he did to Purpose. And thus ended this miraculous Dispensation.

V. One of them declared a most strange and desolating Judgment wou'd come on this City in Three Weeks time; but after many Months elaps'd, the State of matters

remain

remain there just as they were, and nothing unusual or remarkable has happened, but that Providence which happen'd a few Days since; and wou'd to God some wou'd seriously consider it.

VI. Last *Winter*, they predicted most destructive pestilential Fogs or Mists, that shou'd sweep away, like a Plague, a vast Number of the Inhabitants of this City, &c. The Issue of this was, many big-bellied Women and fanciful People were at their Wits End upon every such Occasion, which prov'd frequent, it being a *wet* and *open Winter*.

VII. Last *Spring*, they were upon the same Subject, to retrieve, if possible, a miserably baffled Cause; and because that Season and Autumn often are most sickly, and the Bills of Mortality were then rising, they ventured to predict a very unusual Rise, like that in the time of the Plague.

VIII. One of them set a Period, when he shou'd receive the Gift of Miracles; but in a very few Days, when the Party urged him home with his absolute pretences, seeming to let the Weight of the Cause rest upon the Verity of that Prediction; he began notoriously to shuffle and prevaricate, and wou'd needs pretend Ignorance; as well knowing it wou'd be trump'd upon him in due Season, to his Confusion: The Period assign'd is now expiring, and he is still as far from Wonder-working as ever, unless it consist in vain and bold Pretences.

IX. They long since declared they shou'd speedily raise the Dead, and cure all Manner of Diseases; that the Sick and Impotent shou'd throng their Doors; and for quicker Dispatch,

Dispatch, that some in Baskets shou'd be thrust in at Windows, to partake of their miraculous Cures: And notwithstanding, nothing of this has come to pass, after much more time expiring, than was pretended to compleat the Prediction; one has still the Confidence to tell People he shall quickly walk upon the Tops of Houses tread the Water, and fly in the Air, which he dreams of frequently in the Night: And I doubt not but what he pretends to out of Sleep, will shortly prove worse than a waking Dream, if he shall dare to make the Experiment once in Seven Years.

X. Judgments have been absolutely threatened to fall upon particular Persons and Families, the Nation and City; and some Periods of time have been set for Repentance, without which the Judgments were declared to be unavoidable: yet after all no extraordinary Signs of personal, domestic, or national Repentance appearing, the Time has elapsed, without Execution, which manifestly declares the Condition of Repentance, they ever foist in upon these Demands, to be a meer studied Evasion, & saving Expedient at a Pinch.

Many more Articles might be preferr'd against them, but at present I think these sufficient to satisfy any impartial Judgment. I shall only add some Observations on their Conduct and Demeanour, whereby it may appear, that these daring Pretenders are very far from having the Spirit of God to guide and influence them. A Spirit of

Pride, Faction, Bitterness, Revenge, Malice, Passion, Peevishness, cannot possibly be from the Blessed Spirit of God, but from the Spirit of the World, Flesh, or something still worse. Take the following Proofs from matter of Fact. Observe,

(1.) One good Turn, we say, deserves another: When the little Prophetess received her authoritative Commission from the Benediction, &c. of the Arch-Prophet: She no sooner sets up for herself, but she requites him lovingly by a very agreeable Prediction, *viz.* That he and his Brethren shou'd shortly sit upon Golden Thrones, and receive a World of Respect and Reverence at the more full opening of the Scene of the new Dispensation.

(2.) *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the Inhabitants that came not to the Help of the Lord;* thus they take up the Curse of the Angel of the Lord, and pour it out upon all that oppose them, and threaten that Trials of Wrath shall fall on such as refuse to own them the appropriated Heritage of the Lord, and his peculiar Messengers. There's scarce an Extacy, when they do their Tricks, (as they have been heard themselves to call them) but, my Child, Blessings on my Children, and Judgments on your opposers, is the Burthen of the Song: tho' otherwise some of the best Men living. *Nevertheless the Lord their God wou'd not hearken to the Balaamites, but the Lord their God turned the Curse into a Blessing unto them, because the Lord their God loved them,*

(3.) They despise and insult the Magistracy, if it comply not with the Dictates of what they call Inspiration. They traduce openly and scurrilously the Ministry, and in the most opprobrious Terms vilify their Persons, and wou'd discard their Office. You doubt not but the Blessed God will maintain, by his Providence, his own Institution to the End; whatever Dispensation he pleases to introduce. However, it's demonstrable, that Magistrates and Ministers must be of Use till this pretended Dispensation takes Place. Men foam out their Shame, while the Curb is upon them. Were that off, wou'd not Earth soon look like Hell? The pretended Dispensation does not take Place in that Degree they predict, and they dare not fix any time. And when they essayed in any kind to fix a Period, they fail'd and equivocated upon the different Significations of Days, Weeks, Months, and Years, where there's Latitude enough for a plausible Colour. When an Inspiration they upbraided some Ministers as Hirelings, and false Shepherds, for not preaching up the Coming of the Kingdom of Christ; and they were asked *in the Name of God*, what Ministers should do more than they did? and what time they dare assign and stand by for completing an Event of that kind? They were all *Nugatus* and speechless. And does all this now look like any thing from the Spirit of God?

(4.) They say, ordinary Duties must be swallow'd up by extraordinary; and

on this Account, Family-Duties and publick Ordinances have been slighted and neglected, and little room has been left for any Exercise, but that of Extacy and Rapture: And it wou'd be well for them if it wou'd be prov'd, they had been no worse employ'd than in bodily Exercise, which profits little.

(5.) None talk more of the profound Humility of the Prophets, and I know not any that practise it less: If opposed, and held hard to any Point, Disdain appears in their Looks and Words; and if urged come upon the Topick of setting Periods, they soon grow out of all Patience, as well knowing you attack them on the blind Side, where they have been most shamefully foil'd,

(6.) The World knows what a heinous Crime was charged upon a Prophet: Another strove to palliate it, in this Manner, &c. It's a Question whether that be a Sin or no; if it be, it's consistent with a State of Grace. At this Time their Pleadings ran high, to prove prophetick Gifts were not always sanctifying, and boasted mightily of an Instance or two they made use of. In a little time after, when the Lamour was, as they thought, over; some of them declared publicly, they committed a presumptuous Sin: Soft Apologies and high Vindications were made, to credit the Purity and Integrity of their Lives. What they were that pretended to be the Cathartick of old; and what that Generation is, that is pure in their own Eyes, we may now if we consult Antiquity and our Bibles.

(7.) They are often bragging of the Reception they meet with among persons of great Character; how they are caress'd and homag'd; what Declarations such Persons make of their Faith in them, as sent from God: What vast Blessings they leave upon such Families. I believe they can't convince any, in Publick or Private, of one Man of Figure that they have profelyted, beside those that have long been known to be in their Interest; after all this Huff and Noise. But I know one was blest'd by them, that took it for a Curse, as he apprehended its Effects, and earnestly desired to have it taken off again. The Nature of his Blessing was this, from one under pretended Inspiration. "Thy Sins are forgiven thee" " &c. Thou shalt have the sanctifying Gift" " and Graces of the Spirit, and have an ever" " lasting Blessing." I fear 'twill be long ere the Benediction befall the poor Wretch; who has been drunk almost every Day since its Pronunciation.

(8.) They went among the *Socinians*, then to the *Quakers*, and *Philadelphians*: After much rangling it cou'd not easily be decided; who laid the fairest Claim to the Spirit: And after long disputing, they, none of them, cou'd tell what Spirit they were of. A reputed *Socinian* and a *Deist*, are now of the Perswasion; which shews the mighty Force of affected Inspiration, which can unite the Two Poles, when that is conceiv'd to be the *Medium*, able, it seems, to wheedle Deism into the Lap of Enthusiasm.

(9.) Such as hear them profess their Resolutions of dying, rather than they'll ever desert the Cause, wou'd be apt to believe them some of the mightiest Heroes of the Age: But, alas! all is mere Bounce and Bravado; for they fly when none pursues them, but their own Fears and Fancies, as appears by Article III. And tho' they talk big, of suffering at a Stake, and sealing their Testimony with their Blood, while Danger is out of View; yet when but the Shadow of it faces them, they are overwhelmed with Consternation, and scarce know what they say or do: And what is observable, the very Persons that boast loudest of their Courage, act the most sneaking part of Poltroons. "One attempting to get from the Mob: A Gentleman told him there was no Danger: The Prophet's Reply was; Can't a Man have a Fit of an Ague, but he must be mobb'd; the Gentleman's Answer was; If it was an Ague, it was the strangest he ever saw, a Fit the soonest come and gone that ever he beheld. And is this like the Spirit of Truth and Power? A good Conscience and a good Cause will gain Holy Boldness: and what can resist the Spirit of God? Compare this with St. Stephen's Case, and their different Events.

(10.) Some live upon their Commission: When the Prophetess receiv'd the Seal of hers, she told her Friends she was provided for, and shou'd ne'er trouble them: One part of this may be true, but time must determine the other: It's still possible she may return to her old Vocation, and once
more

more occasionally snuff Candles at the Play House. In the *interim*, she has many indecent Movements and Agitations in Harmony with her Brethren the Prophets, which, at present, I forbear to name: They look very indecent, and appear to have a scurvy Tendency. Others throw themselves head-long down Stairs, while others throw some down and stamp upon them with the greatest Violence; and yet none receive any Hurt: Some taken with a sudden Fit of Blindness, others reputed under Symptoms of immediate Death, in the Opinion of a very *volatile Physician*, have been suddenly restored to Sight and Life very miraculously, as the Prophets humbly conceive, by the Efficacy of their Gifts. Another is said to move from one End of the Room to another, without the Use of the *Locomotive* Faculty, or any foreign visible Aid, but the positive Attestations of some of the Brotherhood. These they will have to be Miracles, and as such affix them as Seals to their Commission: And truly, I think, they suit very well the Authority they pretended to before.

Miracles are for a Sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: Why then was this pretended Miracle acted only among themselves, where such only were present, who overflow'd with Faith? The Blessed God ever acts in Conformity to wise and holy Ends, worthy of himself: Miracles are most needful to reinforce a weak Faith, or to gain the Assent of such as have none; God ne'er did, nor will,

work

work Miracles merely to amuze Men, and gratifie their Curiosity. The Prophets must be Steel, and never bend, but hang out the Flag of Defiance, and ne'er change it. See the Warnings of *John*, surnam'd *Lacy*, p. 72. And I think, if possible, they have out-done the Charge: what need of Miracles then can be suppos'd for their own private Use? When Proofs are demanded of their Mission in this kind, they object, Mens Infidelity obstructs the Performance: When any offer themselves, professing the Steadiness of their Faith; the Answer is; they have no Order from the Spirit: By this it appears plainly, That however they pretend to upbraid others for their Infidelity, yet when it comes to the Push, they really have no Faith in themselves.

But now, suppose what is pretended of this kind was real: What certain Conclusions cou'd be drawn from Instances alone of this Nature? It wou'd startle a Man, I confess, to see the Elements change their Nature, and obediently favour strange Attempts; but the Argument hence wou'd by no Means be conclusive, that this must needs be the Effect of the immediate Hand of God, without some other concurring Circumstances, Actions and Tendencies. Every Appearance is not truly what it seems to be; nor is every Wonder a Miracle: Evil Spirits, by Permission, can deceive the Senses, and strangely affect the Imagination, and so obtrude Perceptions upon us, it may be as powerfully, as if we were impress'd by the greatest Realities. And no doubt they can change

change the Course of Nature, when permitted, the more powerfully to delude Men, when they desert their Duty, and enterprize bold Practices, to tempt God to leave them in the Hands of their crafty mighty Enemy, who often changes himself into an Angel of Light, more effectually to deceive. Many Instances of this Nature, authentick enough, are upon Record, if Men wou'd but consider, and duly weigh them; the Neglect of which will, one Day, leave them inexcusable, *Rev.* 13. 13, 14. *And he doth great Wonders, so that he maketh Fire come down from Heaven on the Earth, in the Sight of Men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the Earth, by Means of those Miracles which he had Power to do.* And, *Rev.* 16. 14. *For they are the Spirits of Devils working Miracles.* I wonder any apocalyptical Person shou'd so slightly pass over such Passages, which might do him the greatest Service, and run others quite out of Breath, to fortifie himself in a Delusion. Our Lord and Master tells us, *Mark* 13. 22, 23. *That false Prophets shall rise, and shew Signs and Wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the Elect.* And then subjoins a Caution; *But take ye heed, behold, I have foretold you.* And can any Man now think he follows this Advice, that snatches at every strange Appearance?

(11.) To whistle, hiss, drum, trumpet, &c. in Extacy, is taken for an indubitable Mark of a gracious Visitation, with many other childish and ridiculous Motions. I make no particular Application, but must say in general what long Observation makes

good,

good, a Complication of Lunacy, Enthusiasm, and strong Temptation, has made sad Work in the World. That a ludicrous Demon, when Men are willing to be deceived, may have strange Commission to delude, and keep such as yield to him in his Ways; as God's Children are said to be kept in his, by the Ministry of the Holy Angels: and that justly, tho' judicially, the more to infatuate, and strengthen the Delusion.

(12.) At first the Prophets pretended they knew not what they said in Extacy; of late they say otherwise, and presume to explain and correct, after their Tricks are over, what they so delivered. They have been heard to complain, that the Prophetess grows forgetful of her Messages, and the Spirit, they say, whirls her about like a Whirligig, which brings things to the little Hussy's Mind (as they themselves frequently call her) tho' by the way, if I thought it not a Term of great Familiarity, I shou'd say Men of their Sentiments grew very bold with their Oracle.

(13.) It's an old Saying, and I believe a true one, that the Devil delights much to ape the Almighty, as far as he can: Of old, he set up his Oracle as near as he cou'd to God's Temple: And we now say, where God has his Church, he will have his Chapel. If this be true, we may then guess what Spirit they are of, who institute Mock-Sacraments, and pretend to be sent out Two by Two, to clear the Way to the new Dispensation; who talk of walking
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upon the Water, &c. with other Passages charged upon them above, if any will look back and take the Pains to compare them.

(14.) Relative Duties, the Discharge of which denominate a real Christian, and distinguish him from Hypocrites and meer Pretenders, as much as any thing, are superseded in great Measure by some of them: For the Neglect and Violation of these, the Orders of the Spirit are pretended, while the Scriptures urge the contrary most emphatically. And is it possible for the Blessed Spirit, by private Orders, to countermine, or grant a *Supersedeas* for the Discharge of those Duties He has urged the Study and Practice of so strenuously in the Sacred Scriptures?

(15.) If any ordinary Accident, or Providence occur, that seems afflictive and judi-
ciary, they presently snatch at the Occasion, and tell all about them, This they knew before; that it was but the Consequence of their judicial, minatory Denunciations of Vengeance upon such and such Persons and Families, for their Infidelity, tho' they dare not pretend to the least particular before its actual Completion; and where they have pretended to shake off the Dust of their Feet as a Witness against some, who rejected their imposing Temper, God's Blessing, instead of his Curse, (no doubt they imprecated by such an emblematical Insinuation) still abides upon their Tabernacle. What little creeping Designs does this sneaking Temper insinuate? yet these Gentlemen are your new Dispensators.

(16.) What

(16.) What fills up the Measure of their Confidence is this. They have the Face to tell us ; That if a Hundred Predictions prove false, it shall not in the least shock their Faith, as to the Cause they have espous'd. Good God, that Men who pretend to speak to us authoritatively in thy Name, and by a peculiar Direction from thy Spirit, and that upon Pain of the severest Judgments, if we deny them the Assent of our Faith, shou'd talk thus ridiculously, nay, impiously ! Do they not, Holy God, tacitly implead thy Holy Spirit, which is a Spirit of Truth, while they pretend, under his special and immediate Direction, to foretell Futurities, which they own may fail of a Completion ! O vindicate thy own Cause and Honour in the World, in due Time ; and since both the Deceivers and Deceived are Thine, reduce Wanderers to their Duty, and let such at length give Thee Glory, and find Mercy in taking Shame to themselves.

We have a certain Rule given us by God to examine the Pretensions of those who lay claim to a Prophetick Spirit. *Deut. 18. 21, 22. If thou say in thy Heart, how shall we know the Word which the Lord hath not spoken ? When a Prophet speaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously : thou shalt not be afraid of him.*

Having cited this Text, I think my self oblig'd to give the Reader, the Observation the Reverend Mr. *Whiston*, in his Sermon (being the last of the Lectures of Mr. *Boyl* for this

Year) at St. Paul's, Novemb. 3. made upon it, occasioned by these Pretensions.

" We ought, said he, to observe here, God
 " does not say that in Case a Sign or Wonder,
 " a Promise or Threatning which is foretold by
 " the Prophet come to pass, that Pretender is pre-
 " sently to be esteem'd a *true Prophet* sent by God;
 " because in one Case, at least, it is plain, That
 " the Coming to pass of the Sign or Wonder is
 " not a certain demonstration of a *Divine Mission*,
 " as we are expressly assured by *Moses* elsewhere,
 " in the Case of Temptation to Idolatry, *Deut.*
 " 13. 1, 2, 3. and by our Saviour and his
 " Apostles in parallel Cases in the *New Testa-*
 " *ment*, Matth. 24. 24. 2 Thess. 2. 11. But God
 " assures us on the other Side, that if a Sign or
 " a Wonder, a Promise or a Threatning does
 " not come to pass, that is a sure Token that
 " the Pretence to Divine Revelation is false, and
 " that we have no just Reason to regard or
 " fear such Pretenders. This is certainly a
 " distinct *Criterion* of a false Prophet, given
 " us by God himself, and we may undoubt-
 " edly rely upon it. If any *Persons* in this
 " Age, who pretend to a Prophetick Spirit, or
 " do foretel Events, whether of Mercy or of
 " Judgment, which do not come to pass accor-
 " dingly, we have a Warrant from God him-
 " self for their Rejection, and are by himself
 " commanded not to pay any of that Fear and
 " Reverence to them, which we all owe to
 " Divine Inspiration, once sufficiently attest-
 " ed to us.

Then he told us of an Exception, which
 is the only one the Scripture mentions;
 namely, When a People or Nation repent of
 their

their Wickedness, and turn from their Sins; concluding this Matter with these Words.

“ We have a sure Rule to depend on in the
 “ Trial of Prophets, that if the things they
 “ foretel, or any of them, come not to pass
 “ exactly, and according to the Prediction,
 “ without an *Evident* and *plain Change* in the
 “ Persons to whom they belong, then most
 “ certainly these *are the things which the Lord*
 “ *hath not spoken*, the pretended Prophets *have*
 “ *spoken them presumptuously*, and we are here
 “ caution’d and commanded by God not to be
 “ afraid of them.

These I am perswaded, were his very Words ;
 but I am sure I have not mistaken his Sense.
 The Application is easie.

I close all with a Passage still depending,
 ’tis this : One has predicted, that a *Fr — ch*
 Minister in a little Time shall visibly be
 torn away by the Devil in the Face of the
 Congregation. The Truth of this must be left
 to Time to determine, and Mens Pati-
 ence, if any have Stock enough to wait
 for the Event, and observe their fine De-
 vices in the mean time to defer Execution, till
 the matter sink in Silence, partly by Delay, but
 chiefly by starting new Amuzements from the
 inexhaustible Fund of Prophetick Vision.

What I have here advanced, I aver, in the
 main, to be matter of Fact, as near as possible
 I can express it. The matter contain’d in the
 Articles above specified, was delivered under
 pretended Inspiration : And for the Observa-
 tions, most of them, if not all, are founded
 on pure Fact. May mine Arm fall from my
 Shoulder-Blade, and my Arm be broken from

the Bone, rather than my Hand shou'd be lifted up against the Almighty, or be employ'd against His Holy and Blessed Spirit: The very Possibility of this has aw'd me, till I saw my Way and Duty very clear.

I dare not deny absolutely what is related in the *Cry from the Desert*: Some of those Instances, for ought I know, may be true. The ever Blessed God does not very often openly oppose his Providence, in the manner there express'd, against His and His Peoples Enemies, tho' it cannot be denied, but He has acted somewhat of that kind on behalf of His in great Extremities. Did He thus signally interpose frequently, the present State wou'd look like that of Vision, more than that of Trial: and much less room wou'd be left for the Exercise of the Faith and Patience of the Saints. God has declared he will be glorified by us in this World. Whatever might be the Occasion of his acting thus in the *Cevennes*, that Reason seems to cease here. Some, we are told, who begin in the Spirit, do yet end in the Flesh: if so, why may not such as were once acted by the Holy Spirit in divers Respects, by drinking in the Spirit of the World, and by yielding to Temptation, bring themselves under the Power of a quite contrary Spirit.

You, Gentlemen, who are the Heads of the Prophetick Tribe, and the prime Buttresses that uphold all its Retainers, may see you are dealt with suitably to your Character: I express all in general Terms, to convince you, my Desire is not to upbraid and shame you personally, but reclaim you from your Misconceits and Errors.

If any pretend to answer these Allegations, if they'll act fairly, let them not confound things with Circumstances, or Modes of Expression : let them say plainly such a thing is true or false, in part or whole : Or, that there's a Failure only in Words or Circumstances, by Addition or Defalcation, wrong Meanings, or Misconstructions : As some of you are Gentlemen and Scholars, be distinct in your Answers, if you think these worthy of any, as you wou'd do your selves and the World common Justice, and make it at length appear you have not exploded all Principles of Ingenuity. There is no need of Criticisms, Mathematicks, or Politicks, to answer these plain things, but an honest Heart and good Meaning. Trick and Evasion is ever a Sign of a bad Cause, and all intelligent Persons take it so : Don't dodge then in the dark, under Reservations and Ambiguity of Expression : This prejudiceth the World against you, and makes many repute you Impostors of the worst sort. I have more Charity, and can conceive how Shame, &c. may prompt Men, and those not the worst, to study Salvo's and Excuses, to shore up an ill Cause they have undertaken. I conjure you to plain Dealing, as you'll answer it another Day ; be advis'd to give God Glory, which you can't do but by taking some Shame to your selves, and the sooner the better : The longer you put off your Pangs, with the more Pain shall you bring forth. Remember you have exceedingly prejudiced Religion, and open'd the Mouths of Blasphemers : You have help'd to seduce many, and possibly some of Christ's little ones ; if so,

remem-

remember the Weight of the Mill-stone. You can't say you are deceived unwillingly: if you are not blind, by shutting your own Eyes against the Light, you may see you are deluded: Don't think that Plea will be of any Force another Day, but rather a Topick of Indictment for Contumacy. If it be possible, forbear your Anathematizing Temper, which makes you look so much like the Tribe of *Muggleton*, the Beast, the false Prophet, and the Whore of *Babylon*: not that I fear you half so much as I do the *Bruta Fulmina* of the *Vatican*, which by the Help of the secular Arm sometimes fall heavy; for I know *the Curse causeless shall not come, and that Mens violent Dealings often return on their own Pate*: Let who will curse, Lord, do Thou but bless. If you will still remain obstinate, and exercise your critical, political, demonstrating Faculties, to baffle Truth and support Delusion, you will at last cast your selves into some Purgatory; and if ever you are saved, I fear it will be so as by Fire. In the interim I pity and pray for you; but if you will proceed violently and imperiously, and presume to awe the World with Noise, Threats, and Tricks of *Legerdemain*, expect plainer *English*, and your Iniquity shortly to be punish'd by the Judges.

Some Animadversions on Mr. Lacy's Preface to the Third Part of his Warnings, in Answer to a Book, Entitled, Enthusiastick Impostors no Divinely inspired Prophets, &c.

I Expect now, Gentlemen, more candid Dealing than your last Paper expresses, wherein you manifestly conceal some Part of the Truth, and wou'd insinuate to the World Falsity in Fact, by denying some Circumstances only. I'll give a Specimen or two.

P. 5. of Mr. *Lacy's* Preface to his 3d Part, the Paper sent to my L—d Ch—f Justice there mentioned, is declared *not at all to be sent*. Pray let the World know whether no such Paper was brought or convey'd to, or receiv'd by that Honourable Person; for if such a Paper or Message was either brought or conveyed to, or received by him, Mr. *Lacy* only plays with Words, and seems to design to put upon Mankind by Jesuitical Equivocations and Notorious Evasions, which, whatever he may pretend, are utterly inconsistent with the Sincerity the Gospel requires in every true Christian.

P. 6. The Charge there instanc'd in thro' the whole Paragraph, is absolutely deny'd, and an Offer is made *to prove the whole Assertion one entire Falsity*. I think the plain English of this is, That there is not one Syllable of that Charge true, and consequently that there was no Blow given, nor any Swelling, as the effect of such a Blow.

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Will

Will Mr. *Lacy* venture to affirm, that he did not strike his Son, and that with such Violence as to cause a Swelling upon his Head or Face? Will Mr. *Lacy* bring his whole Family to attest this one entire falsity? I demand now, that this be declared in clear and express Terms. If you decline a distinct and satisfactory Account of these Matters, every one may know the Meaning of it, and see how justly you are tax'd with *Subtily and Artifice, Doubling and Insincerity.*

I was well pleas'd to meet with the Third and last Part of your Warnings, especially the last Clause, which I'm confident will bring Matters to a clear Issue, if you will but stand by the plain Meaning of the Expressions you there make Use of. In the interim, these Animadversions are humbly offered to your Consideration, and if you can get clear of them fairly, it may prove a happy Occasion for your own Vindication, and assure your selves, upon any just Remonstrance, you shall find me one of the first to do you justice, in retracting every Charge you can prove to be false. Things are brought into a narrower Compass, Length will now be no part of an Objection, nor can Falsity appear so monstrous as lately it hath been represented. What shou'd be meant by the mighty Power of God attesting your Warnings to be from Him, is obvious enough to any Capacity, in common Acceptation of the propriety of such an Expression; but what you will at length make of it, God and your selves only know. The Power of God is of great Latitude, when we discourse of its Operation: The Conversion of a Sinner is a great Instance of it, and if any are pro-

profelyted to your Party, you call them true Believers; if Matters then answer not your Expectation, it's very possible you may take Sanctuary in this Pretence, before the Six-Months come to an End: Or else tell us of some strange Wonders transacted among your selves. If any thing of this Nature happen, the World will upbraid you, and that very justly, for trifling and juggling. State this Matter therefore more clearly, and specify, as far as your Commission permits you, things of this Consequence, or tell us they are Miracles, or Judgments, in the general; for something of that Nature they must be, if you have any sober Meaning, both from the Nature of your Undertaking, and what you have so long pretended to. Judgments of old were very visible in their Execution, when they came upon a People; and God works Miracles openly, and not in a Corner, when he designs them as Seals to the Commission of his Prophets, who are to proclaim a new and great Dispensation. I take it for granted, that what you tell us shall come to pass in Six Months, is founded on Inspiration, otherwise it's all a Jest, and you would do well to express this fully now. Such as know your big way of talking at a good Distance from the Time of Action and Completion, and when your Predictions fail, your dexterous Way of squeezing all into the Compass of an Auger-hole, will think this a very just Demand. No doubt you'll pretend it unreasonable, after the liberal Concessions you seem to have made: but whoever lives to see the Period of the Prediction, I'm confident will see

see plainly the need of this Precaution, when they shall find the Prophets at their old Sport of Hoop-Als hid. And if what I intimate prove not the Conclusion of this Affair, let this Presumption then stand as a Mark of my Folly to my Infamy; but if I have hit the Mark, let them that should, bear the Reproach. We may guess shortly, what we are to expect of this kind, when we see the Issue of the Tryal, and what will be said, when you find, you are judged by Men; a thing you have boldly declared, and that repeatedly, as the result of Inspiration, should never happen. I have nothing now, Gentlemen, at present to add, but my hearty Wishes and Prayers; That God may be glorified, His Truth promoted, and all Error and Deceit confounded; and may Priest and Prophets, and all the People say, *Amen.*



EPINIS

